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## Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, January 4, 1929.

Subject: "Teaching Thrift to Children." Menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Corn and Its Uses as Food."

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The last time I was in the 10 cent store, I saw an interesting little scene enacted by a mother and her very young daughter.

"Moth-er," said the little girl, "can I have a quarter?"

"No!" said the mother. "What do you want a quarter for?"

"Can I have a dime then? I wanta buy something to take home! Mother, can I please have a dime? I wanta buy something!"

For a few minutes the mother paid no attention. Then the child began again, fretfully: "Mother, will you give me a nickel? Please give me a nickel. I wanta buy some candy. Please, mother"

In exasperation, the mother handed the child a nickel, and the chocolates were purchased--five gooey chocolate candies, with sirupy centers. The sirup traveled from the child's gloves, down the front of her coat, and spattered on her new brown shoes.

"For goodness sakes!" exclaimed her mother, doing some speedy dry-cleaning with a handkerchief. "For goodness sakes. Won't you ever learn that it costs money to keep you in clean clothes!"

This incident set me to thinking. We talk at great length about thrift in the home, saving money, saving time, and making budgets, but how many of us begin at the beginning, and teach thrift to children? Of course we remind them to hang up their clothes, to eat the crusts of their bread, and to clean their shoes in rainy weather. But how many of us try to inculcate habits of saving, at the habit-forming age, and to make thrift attractive?

We can't relegate the teaching of thrift to the schools. The home is the best place to teach it, for the home offers an opportunity for daily practice.

I know one successful family, in which there are five children. When the yearly budget is made, the older children are called in, and their help is enlisted. Each child knows his fair share of the income. Each one contributes to the efficiency of the household, by sharing the work and the responsibility. They know the exact amount their parents are trying to save, and they help save it.



Each child has a small allowance, and earns what he can, besides. They do not receive money for regular household tasks, but they are paid for doing extra jobs, which would ordinarily necessitate hiring outside help.

As soon as the children in this family were old enough, their mother taught them to plan for their own clothing. She began with the smaller things, -- hats, shoes, and gloves. Of course the children made mistakes--but they learned, through experience. Each child had a spending plan, and a saving plan, something like the budget I described the other day, only simpler. When I visited this family, several years ago, the eight-year-old boy told me he was saving twenty-five cents a week, which, at four per cent a year, compounded semi-annually, would amount to over \$70, in five years.

He knew what he was talking about, too, for his parents had explained the terms to him.

The children were early taught to be self-reliant. They were taught to take care of their clothes, because that meant saving time, work, and money. They kept their shoes polished, and their clothing brushed. Their mother made it easy for them to care for their clothing. Their play garments were made of material not easily soiled or torn; such articles as handkerchiefs, caps, overshoes, and gloves, were marked, so they weren't easily lost; and each child had an individual wardrobe, or locker, for his garments. The girls did simple mending, and helped with the washing and ironing. Their mother found that clean clothes stayed clean longer, when the children helped with the ironing, and the girls were more satisfied with plain and simple garments.

The children were taught respect for food, by knowing something of the work involved in its production and preparation. They knew the market prices of various foods, and the girls helped with the cooking.

One thing that I admired about this home was its orderliness. The boys and girls seemed to take more interest in making the house attractive, than their parents did. Small repairs were made by the children. When the boys were old enough, they were taught the proper way to care for a furnace. That interested them in saving coal. They learned to read the gas meters, and took great pride in keeping the readings as low as possible.

I have one more suggestion to pass on to you. Perhaps you have learned, as I have, that boys and girls get much satisfaction from keeping written accounts. A boy with a paper route, for instance, a bank book, and a memorandum book for keeping a record of his income and his expenditures, is in a fair way to learn the value of money, and good business methods.

A very simple memorandum book may be used. Put entries of money received in one column, and those of money saved, and money spent, in another. Every month this record may be summarized, and the total amounts of earnings, savings, and expenditures, transferred to a blank book. Children take more interest in the family budget, if they keep individual records. Besides forming habits of thrift, the children learn the value of a bank account, how to make deposits, write and endorse checks, and so forth.

A noted banker said the other day that as a nation of workers, American citizens command larger wages than are paid in any other country, but as a nation of savers we are far behind many who are less fortunate than we. The

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attitude of the public mind must be changed, said he, from one which welcomes extravagance, and tolerates debt, to a real belief in the desirability of spending a little less than is earned.

Now, since our time is getting short, -- if the transition is not too abrupt -- I'll go from high finance to the problem of preparing dinner. Can you make the change without becoming dizzy? All you need is a pencil, and a piece of paper, for the time being. This is a nice little easy dinner: Savory Vegetable Stew; Red Cabbage Cold Slaw; Corn Muffins; Canned Fruit and Cake. Let's say Spice Cake, for a change. We haven't had a Spice Cake since goodness knows when.

Here's a brand new recipe for the Savory Vegetable Stew - only eight ingredients, for Savory Vegetable Stew:

1 cup diced salt pork	1/2 teaspoon sage
2 cups diced rutabaga turnip	2 cups hot water
1 small onion	1/2 teaspoon salt, and
2 cups diced potato	1/8 teaspoon pepper

Eight ingredients: (Repeat)

Fry the diced salt pork until crisp. Remove the pork and some of the fat from the skillet, and brown the onion and turnip in the remaining fat. Add the potato, salt, sage, and water. Cover, and simmer until the turnip is tender. Remove the cover, and cook until the stew has thickened somewhat. Add the browned salt pork, pepper, and more salt if needed.

To repeat the menu: Savory Vegetable Stew; Red Cabbage Cold Slaw; Corn Muffins; and Canned Fruit and Spice Cake.

Speaking of Corn Muffins reminds me of the bulletin called "Corn and Its Uses as Food." It has lots of good recipes, using cornmeal. Some of the best recipes are corn-meal pancakes, waffles; corn-meal mush with pork; roast pork with batter pudding; scrapple; and others "too numerous to mention."

Monday: "How to Fry".

